

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Gallagher

DATE: 1/6/76

FROM : J. S. Peelman

SUBJECT: MURKIN

1 - Mr. Callahan
1 - Mr. Adams
1 - Mr. Gallagher
1 - Mr. O'Connell
1 - Mr. Peelman
1 - Mr. Helterhoff
1 - Mr. Moore
1 - Mr. Wannall
1 - Mr. Walsh

(Mr. Morrissey)

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PURPOSE: To advise of the institution of investigation to resolve an allegation by [REDACTED] that he and his brother were offered payment in 1967 to murder Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

BACKGROUND: This case pertains to the shooting death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on 4/4/68. James Earl Ray pled guilty to this murder and presently is in local confinement.

By teletype dated 1/5/76, our Atlanta Office advised of information furnished by one [REDACTED] who, in essence, claims he and his brother, [REDACTED], while in an Atlanta bar in October - November, 1967, were approached by a mutual friend, [REDACTED] who asked the [REDACTED] if they were interested in making \$50,000. [REDACTED] told them he would put them in contact with an individual who would pay them to murder King. Approximately one week later at the same bar, the [REDACTED] were approached by an individual named Ralph (Last name unknown), who said "I guess you know why I'm here" and subsequently opened his briefcase displaying what he said was \$25,000. [REDACTED] said they told Ralph they needed time to think it over. Ralph replied "if your mind is not made up now, I can't do business with you." [REDACTED] said Ralph never said the money being offered was to kill King. [REDACTED] states neither he nor his brother were involved in murder of King.

[REDACTED] also stated that the only other individuals aware of this meeting with Ralph (LNU) were his former wife, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] owner of the bar. He stated [REDACTED] had no first-hand knowledge, and she is aware of the facts as he described them to her.

HNH:bap (10)

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RE: MURKIN

██████████ observed Ralph (LNU) enter and exit the bar but had not entered into the conversation. ██████████ stated the reason he believes he and his brother were contacted by ██████████ is because his brother ██████████ served ██████████ years for ██████████ and had a reputation for being an expert with a shotgun. ██████████ stated he is willing to take a polygraph in this matter.

DETAILS: On 1/6/76, this matter discussed with Mr. Robert A. Murphy, Chief, Criminal Section, Civil Rights Division (CRD), U. S. Department of Justice and he requested immediate investigation to resolve this allegation. Mr. Murphy requested the following investigation:

Interview ██████████, ██████████ and ██████████ for any information they have re this allegation by ██████████ obtain artist's conception of Ralph (LNU) from ██████████ determine present whereabouts, including residence and employment of ██████████ - CRD stated ██████████ should not be interviewed at this time; determine all places where ██████████ incarcerated to determine if he ever was incarcerated with James Earl Ray and handle any additional obvious and logical leads developed, such as the interview of any additional witnesses developed during interview. CRD will make a determination whether ██████████ should be given a polygraph examination upon the completion of the above investigation. This request from Mr. Murphy has been confirmed in writing.

Atlanta has been advised by separate communication to conduct this investigation immediately.

ACTION: For information. You will be advised of any pertinent developments.

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